



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

Board of Health Sidney-Shelby County

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Shelby County Food Safety Newsletter

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Food Service Operator Outbreak Investigation Kit

The Council to Improve Foodborne Outbreak Response (CIFOR) has developed the CIFOR Foodborne Illness Response Guidelines for Owners, Operators and Managers of Food Establishments (CIFOR Industrial Guidelines). This toolkit can be found at <http://www.cifor.us/projind.cfm>, broken down in parts, or as the entire booklet at <http://www.cifor.us/documents/CIFOR%20Industry%20Guidelines/CIFOR-Industry-Guidelines.pdf>

The first step in outbreak investigation is to contact the local health department. They will be in charge of any investigation. This guideline was developed to give food service/retail food establishment operators the tools they need to respond to a foodborne illness outbreak. It includes forms to use for gathering information, questions to ask concerning the outbreak, what steps to take to determine the threat, whether to stay open or close, and terms and definitions you may hear during an investigation and what they mean.

The toolkit also has numerous posters you can display to encourage employees to stay home when sick. The information in the kit can also be used to train employees about food safety, safe food handling practices, and why it's important to stay home when sick. The toolkit is free for download or a booklet can be ordered.

What is Professional Quality Equipment and Why is it Not for Commercial Use?

We have all seen it. Beautiful kitchen equipment in kitchen remodeling stores or on home remodeling shows on TV. They have numerous special features, like built-in grills, hidden ventilation hoods, convection ovens, special panels on the front to match the cupboards, shelves that move around to

accommodate large trays or equipment. Brand names that come to mind are Jenn Air, Viking, Sub Zero, Kitchenaid, and Wolf. Can these be used in a commercial kitchen? The answer is no. All of these beautiful appliances are made for household use. They may look like commercial equipment, but they are not certified by an independent certification company as being durable enough to use in a commercial kitchen. Real commercial equipment must be able to hold up to hours of hard use, recover temperatures quickly, be easy to clean, take apart and put back together after cleaning and sanitizing. The gas connectors have to hold up a lot of abuse. Electrical components must be durable and meet the criteria insurance companies require for a commercial food service/retail food establishment. So save these appliances for home, where they are meant to be.

Home kitchen with professional quality appliances



Dealing with the Allergic Customer

Researchers estimate that up to 15 million Americans have food allergies. According to a study released in 2013 by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, food allergies among children increased approximately 50% between 1997 and 2011. The number of people who have a food allergy is growing, but there is no clear answer as to why. Every 3 minutes, a food allergy reaction sends someone to the emergency department – that is more than 200,000 emergency department visits per year. A reaction to food can range from a mild response (such as an itchy mouth) to anaphylaxis, a severe and potentially deadly reaction. (information from foodallergy.org)

The Ohio Retail Food Safety Code states that persons in charge of a food service or food establishment must be able to identify any food they sell, process or make that has a major food allergen in it. 90% of all food allergic reactions are caused by eggs, milk, fish and shellfish, tree nuts, wheat, peanuts and soybeans. Most commercially prepared pre-packaged foods identify these allergens in the ingredients on the label, per federal requirements. Though not required by law, many foods also identify gluten, a protein found in wheat, rye, barley and certain other grains, that can make gluten sensitive people sick.



The web site foodallergy.org has good advice on management of a food allergic customer. There is also a course at

www.servsafe.com/allergens that can teach you about food allergen management. There is a fee for this course. Also, on our web site, www.shelbycountyhealthdept.org/food-service there is a training manual that can be used to train employees. It is available in both English and Spanish and can be downloaded.

Food Defense 101

The food industry plays an integral part in protecting the nation's food infrastructure. Food Defense 101 are free online courses that provide training in preparedness against an intentional attack against our food supply. The courses provide an understanding of and guidance for developing a Food Defense Plan based on a common sense approach.

Food Defense 101 is comprised of four courses:

- Food Defense Awareness for the Food Professional;
- Food Defense Awareness for the Front-line Employee;
- Food Defense Regulations; and,
- ALERT, for owners and operators of food facilities

They are designed to stimulate discussion of food defense within the industry. These courses can be found at:

<http://www.fda.gov/Food/FoodDefense/ToolsEducationalMaterials/ucm353774.htm> There are downloadable certificates for each part to

keep for your training records. Become part of the team to protect our country's food supply!

Approved Sources of Food

Food made or sold in licensed food services and food establishments must come from approved sources. But just what is an approved source? Most foods have to come from a source where they have undergone an inspection by some governmental agency. Canned foods and other non-perishable foods are approvable straight from the inspected food processing plant because there are inspectors within the business.

Meats and most eggs have to have an inspection by the state Department of Agriculture or the USDA. Most other time/temperature controlled for safety (TCS) foods fall under the inspection of the FDA, the state department of agriculture, or the state or local health departments. Companies that transport TCS foods must be inspected, also. This insures these foods are processed and stored in a safe manner and at safe temperatures.

Food must be kept in an approvable state, meaning within the bounds of an inspected facility. If you own a restaurant, you can have TCS foods delivered to your licensed business. But you could not store these foods at an unlicensed facility, such as your home. You could buy food from another licensed food service or food establishment. You would be responsible for the transportation temperature.

Unprocessed fruits and vegetables do not require the source to be inspected. This allows the business to use or sell their own home grown vegetables and fruits, for example. Mushrooms and sprouts must be inspected, though, due to the greater food safety concerns with these foods.

Cottage foods are considered an approved source. These foods must meet the requirements spelled out in the Ohio Revised Code (OAC) 3715.01, and be properly labeled. Honey, sorghum and maple syrup from exempt processors, as defined in OAC 3715.021 are also approved foods. More information on cottage foods can be found on our web site. If you have any doubts or questions regarding whether a food is approvable, contact the sanitarians here at the health department.
